

Session 13-07 a Regular Meeting of the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Ulmer at 6:00 p.m. on July 24, 2013 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONER CARROLL, HARTLEY, WEDIN, ULMER, ZIMMERMAN

ABSENT: HOWARD, STOCKBURGER

STAFF: PORT DIRECTOR/HARBORMASTER HAWKINS  
DEPUTY CITY CLERK JACOBSEN

### **AGENDA APPROVAL**

ZIMMERMAN/HARTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Craig Forrest, non-resident and Homer Harbor user, commented about his history of harbor use beginning in 1967, and that he strongly supports the implementation of a no wake policy. He has listened to Harbor Officers asking people slow down, at least daily for many years. He hasn't seen anything else being done other than posting signs and seeing people flipping them off. He has asked people to slow down and been told F- you and the Harbormaster too, from a charter boat and a sport fishing boat. He is a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary and one of their boats, hauling in another boat was pushed up onto the entrance of the break water because of the wake of a boat. His personal boat was between the mooring buoy and the end of the harbor, the wake from another boat departing the harbor buried his bow, and his boat has a three foot draft. He cited other personal experiences of unsafe situations caused by wakes from other boats in the harbor area, including his wife being thrown off his boat, having his hands banged up, and being bounced so hard on the grid from a wake while the tide was going out it moved the boat back on the grid, he almost fell off and his wife was thrown around inside the cabin. She could have died and that would have resulted in lawsuits. He has seen the water taxi boats go in and out of the Harbor weaving through other boats just to get in front. He doesn't know the answer or what they have in mind about a no wake policy; one issue is deciding what a wake is. He is interested in hearing their discussion tonight.

### **RECONSIDERATION**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. June 26, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes

HARTLEY/WEDIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.

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There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

**VISITORS**

**STAFF AND COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOROUGH REPORTS**

A. Port and Harbor Director's Report for June 2013

Harbormaster Hawkins reviewed his report that was included in the packet.

Chair Ulmer asked about LED lights at the harbor. Harbormaster Hawkins explained they have been looking at LED's and while there are some areas where they would work, right now LED's don't put out enough light to be used in the high mast lighting in the harbor.

Commissioner Zimmerman asked about the annual inspections listed under Port Maintenance. Harbormaster Hawkins said he would have to follow up on that.

Commissioner Wedin commented about a loose board that resulted in an injury in front of Coal Point. Harbormaster Hawkins said nothing was reported to the Harbormaster's office about it, but he made a note to check on it.

Commissioner Carroll asked if the Ice Plant has been able to keep up with the demand because other places up the road were running out during the peak of the season. Harbormaster Hawkins said there was one day they had to ration but otherwise have been able to keep up.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**PENDING BUSINESS**

A. Homer Spit Parking Lot Adjacent to Boardwalk

Harbormaster Hawkins had nothing new to report since last meeting. The Commission agreed to bring this back at a later time.

**NEW BUSINESS**

A. Memorandum from Deputy City Clerk Re: Selection of a Port and Harbor Advisory Commission Member to serve on the Port and Harbor Building Task Force

Commissioner Hartley volunteered to participate on the Task Force.

The Commission agreed by consensus that Commissioner Hartley be appointed to the Task Force.

B. Implementing the Homer Harbor's No Wake Policy

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Harbormaster Hawkins explained that the no wake policy in the harbor is the speed limit is two miles per hour and wakes are considered anything that causes damage to another vessel or to infrastructure. He thinks 2 mph is too slow, and it makes it hard for some vessels to maintain steerage. It also varies, for example, the tug Redoubt can go thru at 8 knots and not make a ripple in the water. The type of hull can make a difference as well. There is code relating to this but in his opinion it is inadequate. Harbormaster Hawkins said that he or the Harbor Officers could be sworn in to write citations, but to do that they have to be able to have a good case.

One idea he has is a mid-channel "No Wake" buoy, that would have to be seasonal, located between the harbor entrance and the Hickory to serve as a reminder. It might also help create a traffic pattern. It's been about two years since staff has been able to get out on the harbor skiff and tug to patrol. Doing that consistently helps, but as soon as you stop, it picks back up. He has also considered cameras.

Commissioner Zimmerman suggested flyer or information sheets explaining what a wake is and why you don't do it, might help raise awareness and not cost a lot of money.

Harbormaster Hawkins said it isn't a specific group of users necessarily. A lot of times it is locals, and also businesses who are trying to make as many trips as they can push it all the time.

They talked about where the no wake zone is and Harbormaster Hawkins explained that it is inside the harbor and runs to the end of the Pioneer Dock.

The Commission agreed with the idea of citations. The technicality of the speed is immaterial, people know when they are creating a wake, and no wake is the golden rule. You are responsible for your wake.

Harbormaster Hawkins explained that staffing is an issue when it comes to issuing citations.

Commissioner Carroll felt that it is an area where the Coast Guard could step in since their roll is public safety.

As a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary Mr. Forrest commented that while he can't speak on behalf of the Coast Guard, he has talked to them about it and his understanding the Coast Guard doesn't have jurisdiction in the harbor as they are city waters, unless they are asked to assist. He added that the Coast Guard is fully tasked, just as the harbor staff is.

The group continued to discuss issues with wake inside the harbor and outside the harbor entrance, and challenges of enforcement. The Commission was supportive of the ideas of the No Wake buoy and also of locating cameras where they will be most effective. It was also suggested that a Public Service Announcement could be helpful.

#### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

- A. Monthly Statistical & Performance Report June 2013
- B. Weekly Crane and Ice Report
- C. Deep Water Dock Report
- D. Pioneer Dock Report & Ferry Landings Report
- E. Water Usage Report
- F. 2013 Strategic Plan

**COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

**COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF**

Harbormaster Hawkins touched on some items on the quarterly revenue report in relation to last year's rate increases.

Pioneer Dock fuel wharfage 2011- \$56,433; 2012- \$58,598; 2013- \$124,673. In response to concern raised about the fee increase, he reminded them this is the first increase in 20 years.

Pioneer Dock dockage 2011- \$30,916; 2012- \$19,798; 2013- \$60,922

Deep Water Dock stevedoring 2011- \$4,900; 2012- \$5,900; 2013- \$31,368

Deep Water Dock wharfage 2011-\$652; 2012- \$15,800; 2013- \$35,618

Deep Water Dock dockage 2011- \$49,000; 2012- \$34,000; 2013- \$288,013

He passed around a copy of the Cargo Business news so the Commission could see the Harbor's advertisement.

**COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER**

**COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Ulmer thanked everyone for a good meeting.

**COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION**

Commissioner Hartley said he is happy to see the harbor is very busy out there. It's really amazing.

Commissioner Zimmerman and Wedin had no comments.

Commissioner Carroll since we are running on all cylinders so we could lower the harbor rates for locals.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 28, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

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MELISSA JACOBSEN, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved:\_\_\_\_\_